

THE BEST OF ALL SIGHTS

NO. 1509

A SERMON
WRITTEN AT MENTONE,
BY C. H. SPURGEON.

“But we see Jesus.”
Hebrews 2:9.

IN Holy Scripture faith is placed in opposition to the sight of the eyes and yet it is frequently described as looking and seeing. It is opposed to carnal sight because it is spiritual sight, a discernment which comes not of the body, but arises out of the strong belief of the soul, worked in us by the Holy Spirit. Faith is sight in the sense of being a clear and vivid perception, a sure and indisputable discovery, a realizing and unquestionable discernment of fact. We see Jesus, for we are sure of His presence. We have unquestionable evidence of His existence and we have an intelligent and intimate knowledge of His person. Our soul has eyes far stronger than the dim optics of the body and with these we actually see Jesus. We have heard of Him and upon the witness of that hearing we have believed, and through believing there has come to us a new life which rejoices in new light and in opened eyes, and “we see Jesus.” In the old sense of sight, we speak of Him as of one “whom having not seen we love,” but in the new sense, “we see Jesus.” Beloved reader, have you such a renewed nature that you have new senses and have you with these senses discerned the Lord? If not, may the Holy Spirit yet quicken you and meanwhile, let us whom He has made alive assure you that we have heard His voice, for He says, “My sheep *hear* My voice.” We have “*tasted* the good Word of God.” We have *touch*ed Him and have been made whole. We have also known the *smell* of His fragrance, for His name to us is “as ointment poured forth.” And now, in the words of our text, “We *see* Jesus.” Faith is all the senses in one and infinitely more. And those who have it not are in a worse case than the blind and deaf, for spiritual life itself is absent.

I. Come, then, brethren beloved, whose eyes have been illuminated, let us muse awhile upon our privileges that we may exercise them with delight and praise the Lord with them. First, let us regard the glorious sight of Jesus as COMPENSATION. The text begins with, “But,” because it refers to some things which we do not yet see which are the objects of strong desire. “We see not yet all things put under Him.” We do not as yet see Jesus acknowledged as King of kings by all mankind and this causes us great sorrow, for we wish to see Him crowned with glory and honor in every corner of the earth by every man of woman born. Alas, He is to many, quite unknown, by multitudes rejected and despised, and by comparatively few is He regarded with reverence and love. Sights surround us which might well make us cry with Jeremiah, “Oh that my head were waters and my eyes a fountain of tears,” for blasphemy and rebuke, idolatry, superstition and unbelief prevail on every side. “But,” says the apostle, “we see Jesus,” and this sight compensates for all others, for we see Him now, no longer made a little lower than the angels and tasting the bitterness of death, but, “crowned with glory and honor.” We see Him, no more after the flesh in shame and anguish, far more ravishing is the sight, for we see His work accomplished, His victory complete, His empire secure. He sits as a priest upon the throne at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies are made His footstool.

This is a divine compensation for the tarrying of His visible kingdom, because *it is the major part of it*. The main battle is won. In our Lord’s endurance of His substitutionary griefs and in the overthrow of sin, death, and hell by His personal achievements, the essence of the conflict is over. Nothing is left to be done at all comparable with that which is already performed. The ingathering of the elect and the subjection of all things are comparatively easy of accomplishment now that the conflict in the heavenly places is over and Jesus has led captivity captive. We may look upon the conquest of the kingdoms of

this world as a mere routing of the beaten host now that the power of the enemy has been effectually broken by the great Captain of our salvation.

The compensation is all the greater because our Lord's *enthronement is the pledge of all the rest*. The putting of all things under Him, which as yet we see not, is guaranteed to us by what we do see. The exalted Savior has all power given unto Him in heaven and in earth—and with this “all power” He can, at His own pleasure, send forth the rod of His strength out of Zion and reign in the midst of His enemies. With Him are all the forces needful for universal dominion. His white horse waits at the door and whensoever He chooses, He can ride forth conquering and to conquer. At a word from His lips, the harlot of Babylon shall perish and the false prophet shall die and the idols of the heathen shall be utterly abolished. The empire of wickedness is as a vision of the night, a black and hideous nightmare pressing on the soul of manhood, but when He awakes, He will despise its image and it shall melt away.

Turn we then, wiping our tears away, from the wretched spectacles of human superstition, skepticism, and sorrow to the clear vision above us in the opened heaven. There we see “the Man,” long promised, the desire of all nations, the deliverer, the death of death, the conqueror of hell—and we see Him not as one who girds on His harness for the battle, but as one whose warfare is accomplished, who is waiting the time appointed of the Father when He shall divide the spoil. This is the antidote to all depression of spirit, the stimulus to hopeful perseverance, the assurance of joy unspeakable.

II. Nor is this sight a mere compensation for others which as yet are denied us—it is in itself the cause of present EXULTATION. This is true in so many ways that time would fail us to attempt to enumerate them. “We see Jesus” and in Him *we see our former unhappy condition forever ended*. We were fallen in Adam, but we see in Jesus our ruin retrieved by the second Adam. The legal covenant frowned upon us as we beheld it broken by our first federal head. The new covenant smiles upon us with a whole heaven of bliss as we see it ordered in all things and sure in Him who is Head over all things to the church. Sin once doomed us to eternal despair, but not now, for He who has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself has justified His people by His resurrection. The debt no longer burdens us, for there in eternal glory is the Man who paid it once and for all. A sight of Jesus kills each guilty fear, silences each threat of conscience, and photographs peace upon the heart. There remains nothing of all the past to cause a dread of punishment, or arouse a fear of desertion, for Christ who died ever lives to make intercession for us, to represent us before the Father, and to prepare for us a place of everlasting rest. We might see ourselves as dead under the law were it not that He has blotted out the handwriting which was against us. We might see ourselves under the curse were it not that He, who was once made a curse for us, now reigns in fullness of blessing. We weep as we confess our transgressions, but we see Jesus and sing for joy of heart, since He has finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

The same is sweetly true of the present, for *we see our present condition to be thrice blessed by virtue of our union with Him*. We see not as yet our nature made perfect and cleansed from every tendency to evil—rather do we groan, being burdened because of the sin which dwells in us—the old man which lusts and rebels against the blessed dominion of grace. And we might be sorely cast down and dragged into despair were it not that “we see Jesus” and perceive that in Him we are not what the flesh would argue us to be. He represents us most truthfully and looking into that mirror we see ourselves justified in Christ Jesus, accepted in the Beloved, adopted of the Father, dear to the Eternal heart. Yes, in Him raised up together and made to sit together in the heavenlies. We see self and blush and are ashamed and dismayed, “but we see Jesus” and His joy is in us and our joy is full. Think of this, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the next time you are upon the dunghill of self-loathing. Lift up now your eyes and see where He is in whom your life is hid! See Jesus and know that as He is, so are you before the Infinite Majesty. You are not condemned, for He is enthroned. You are not despised nor abhorred, for He is beloved and exalted. You are not in jeopardy of perishing, nor in danger of being cast away, for He dwells eternally in the bosom of the Lord God Almighty. What a vision is this for you, when you see Jesus and see yourself complete in Him, perfect in Christ Jesus!

Such a sight effectually *clears our earthly future of all apprehension*. It is true we may yet be sorely tempted and the battle may go hard with us, but we see Jesus triumphant and by this sign we grasp the victory. We shall perhaps be subjected to pain, to poverty, to slander, to persecution, and yet none of these things move us because we see Jesus exalted and therefore know that these are under His power and cannot touch us except as He grants them His permission so to do. Death is at times terrible in prospect, but its terror ceases when we see Jesus who has passed safely through the shades of the sepulcher, vanquished the tyrant of the tomb, and left an open passage to immortality to all His own. We see the pains, the groans, and dying strife—see them, indeed, exaggerated by our fears—and the only cure for the consequent alarm is a sight of Him who has said, “He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” When we see Jesus—past, present, and to come—we are summed up in Him and over all shines a glorious life which fills our souls with unspeakable delight.

III. Thirdly, “we see Jesus” with gladdest EXPECTATION. His glorious *person* is to us the picture and the pledge of what we shall be for, “It does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like He; for we shall see Him as He is.” In infinite love, He condescended to become one with us here below, as says the apostle, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.” And this descent of love on His part to meet us in our low estate is the assurance that His love will lift us up to meet Him in His high estate. He will make us partakers of His nature, inasmuch as He has become partaker of our nature. It is written, “Both He that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” What bliss is this that we should be like to the incarnate God! It would seem too good to be true, were it not after the manner of our Lord to do great things for us and unsearchable.

Nor may we alone derive comfort as to our future from His person, we may also be made glad by a hope as to His place. Where we see Jesus to be, there shall we also be. His heaven is our heaven. His prayer secures that we shall be with Him where He is, that we may behold His glory. Today we may be in a workhouse, or in the ward of a hospital, or in a ruinous hovel, “but we see Jesus” and we know that before long we shall dwell in the palace of the great King.

The glory of Jesus strikes the eyes at once and thus we are made to exult in His position, for it, too, is ours. He will allow us to sit upon His throne, even as He sits upon the Father’s throne. He has made us kings and priests unto God and we shall reign forever and ever. Whatever of rest, happiness, security, and honor our glorious Bridegroom has attained, He will certainly share it with His spouse—yes, and all His people shall know what it is to be heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified together.

How soon our condition shall rise into complete likeness to the ascended Lord we cannot tell, but it cannot be long and it may even be a very short time. The veil of time is, in some cases very thin—another week may be the only separation. And then! Ah, then! We shall see Jesus and what a sight will it be. Heaven lies in that vision. ‘Tis all the heaven our loving hearts desire.

The sight of Jesus which we now enjoy is a foretaste of the clearer sight which is reserved for us and therefore it will be a happy wisdom to be much in the enjoyment of it. A thousand things tempt us away and yet there is not one of them worth a moment’s thought in comparison.

What are works of art and discoveries of science compared with our Beloved? What are the gems which adorn the brow of beauty or the eyes which flash from the face of loveliness, if placed in rivalry with Him? Other matters, weighty and important, call for our thought and yet even these we may place in a second rank when Jesus is near.

We may not be doctors of divinity, much as we would desire to be deeply instructed in the truths, “but we see Jesus.” Into many mysteries we cannot pry, “but we see Jesus.” Where the divine sovereignty harmonizes with human responsibility is too deep a problem for us, “but we see Jesus.” The times and the seasons baffle us, the dispensation of the end is dark to us, “but we see Jesus.” Glory over us, you far-seeing prophets! Deride us, you deep-glancing philosophers! We leave you to your boastings. We are

poor, short-sighted beings, and know but little—but one thing we know—whereas we were once blind, now we see and “we see Jesus.”

This sight has made us unable to see many things which now dazzle our fellow men. They can see priestly power in a certain set of men like themselves. This we cannot see, for “we see Jesus,” as ending the line of sacrificing priests and bestowing a common priesthood upon all the saints. Many see great wisdom in the various schools of doubt in which we see nothing except pretentious folly, for “we see Jesus” and all human wisdom pales before the wisdom of God which is perfected in Him.

Certain of our brethren see perfection in the flesh, “but we see Jesus.” Others see the church and their own sect, “but we see Jesus.” A few see nothing but their own separateness from everybody else and the peculiar excellence of their exclusiveness, “but we see Jesus.”

Come, beloved, let us get to our secret chambers of communion and see Jesus there as from the hill of Pisgah. Let us turn the pages of Scripture and see Jesus there amid the beds of spices. Let us frequent ordinances, especially the breaking of bread, and see Jesus there. Let us watch in our experience as we are conformed unto His sufferings and see Him there. Let us go into the field of holy labor and as we gird ourselves and put on the yoke of service, let us see our Master there. Yes, in all things let us learn to see our Lord, for nature and providence, experience and Scripture are hung with mirrors which reflect Him. Till the day breaks and the shadows flee away, let us continue to gaze upon Him, till our eyes shall actually see Him for ourselves and not another. Be this the grand distinction of our lives—whatever others may see or not see, “WE SEE JESUS.”

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